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14 April 1967

TO: The Director

FROM: John A. McCone

1. No memorandum can be located covering the August 10, 1962 meeting; however, it is highly probable that one exists.

2. Meetings of August 8 or 9, 1962, in the JCS Operations Room (Pentagon) and August 10, 1962, in Secretary Rusk's Conference Room were for the purpose of considering staff proposals for Phase II of operation MONGOOSE. This operation was under the direction of General Lansdale, with Wm. Harvey handling CIA participation (under FitzGerald). At one of these meetings -- probably the meeting in the JCS Room -- I recall a suggestion being made to liquidate top people in the Castro regime, including Castro. I took immediate exception to this suggestion, stating that the subject was completely out of bounds as far as the USG and CIA were concerned and the idea should not be discussed nor should it appear in any papers, as the USG could not consider such actions on moral or ethical grounds.

3. Immediately after the meeting, I called on Secretary McNamara personally and re-emphasized my position, in which he heartily agreed. I did this because operation MONGOOSE -- an inter-departmental affair -- was under the operational control of DOD through the JCS.

4. At no time did the suggestion receive serious consideration by the Special Group (augmented) nor by any individual responsible for policy.

5. Through the years the Cuban problem was discussed in terms such as "dispose of Castro," "remove Castro," "knock off Castro," etc., and this meant the overthrow of the Communist Government in Cuba and the replacing of it with a democratic regime. Terms such as the above appear in many working papers, memoranda for the record, etc., and, as stated, all refer to a change in the Cuban Government.

  
John A. McCone